

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2 and 4- 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shaw (U.S. Pat. No. 3,924,690) in view of Beccu et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,062,322).

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Chukwurah for the consideration given applicant's attorney at the interview of May 1, 2008. At the interview, agreement was reached with respect to the claims that they are distinguished over the prior art of record. It was further agreed that, in the absence of more relevant prior art, the captioned application should be in condition for allowance.

As discussed with the Examiner, the Shaw patent fails to teach an air-cushion. No direction is given in Shaw that the lower part of the piston 3 cooperates with the elements to the extent that in effect an air-cushion is formed.

Looking at the figure of Shaw, between the sleeve and the shank 5, there exists a space being defined so as to accommodate the interrupted peripheral ring 10, which is constituted by the terminal portions of the spines 9. This means that, even if the piston is fitted to the sleeve, no cushioning effect could occur because of the great maintained space. Further, reference numeral 11 is defined as "a diametrically split retaining ring", which implies that no sealing effect occurs even at this place.

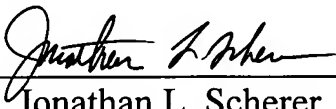
Therefore, as agreed at the interview, claims 1 and 9 are distinguished over the Shaw patent, taken alone or in combination with the other art of record.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims in the present application, as they now stand, patentably distinguish over the references cited and applied by the Examiner and are, therefore, in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is in order, and such favorable action and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

However, if after reviewing the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner has any questions or comments, he is cordially invited to contact the undersigned attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

JACOBSON HOLMAN PLLC

By: 
Jonathan L. Scherer
Reg. No. 29,851

400 Seventh Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004-2201
Telephone: (202) 638-6666
Date: May 2, 2008
JCH/JLS:crj